AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Canceled)

2. (Canceled)

3. (Canceled)

4. (Canceled)

5. (Canceled)

6. A computer network comprising:

a receiver node; and

at least one sender node coupled with the receiver node over the network;

the at least one sender node being configured to send reports to the receiver node at irregular intervals, wherein the reports include information regarding the time intervals at which the first sender node will send subsequent reports to the receiver node.

7. The computer network of claim 6, wherein the receiver node is configured to create an expectation window for receiving each report from the at least one sender node.

8. The computer network of claim 7, wherein the expectation window opens at a preset time prior to the corresponding time interval.

9. The network of claim 6, wherein the receiver node is configured to send a query to the at least one sender node if one of the reports is not received while its expectation window remains open.

10. The network of claim 6, further comprising a second sender node configured to send reports to the receiver node at irregular intervals, wherein the reports

include information regarding the time intervals at which the second sender node will send subsequent reports to the receiver node.

11. A method for exchanging data between a sender and a receiver over a communications link, the method comprising:

receiving from the sender data indicative of an interval at which a report will be sent;

creating an expectation window for receiving the report from the sender during a time period which includes the interval; and

opening the expectation window during the time period.

12. The method of claim 11, further comprising receiving the report while the expectation window remains open.

13. The method of claim 12, further comprising closing the expectation window without responding to the sender.

14. The method of claim 11, further comprising creating another expectation window for receiving a subsequent report from the sender during a subsequent time period.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the report includes data indicative of a subsequent interval at which the subsequent report will be sent, wherein the subsequent interval is measured from the sending of the report to the sending of the subsequent report.

16. The method of claim 11, further comprising generating a schedule at the receiver for receiving reports from the sender.

17. The method of claim 16, further comprising monitoring the ambient usage of the communications link between the sender and the receiver.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein said generating step includes selecting a seed number representing the average interval for exchanging data between the sender and the receiver as a function of the ambient usage of the communications link.

19. The method of claim 11, further comprising generating an event if the report is not received while the expectation window remains open.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein said generating step includes sending a status inquiry to the sender.

21. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the steps recited in claim 11.

22. (Canceled)

23. (Canceled)

24. (Canceled)

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29. (Canceled)

30. (Canceled)

31. (Canceled)

32. (Canceled)

33. (Canceled)

34. (Canceled)

35. (Canceled)

36. (Canceled)